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REPORT

On the Health and Sanitary Condition of the Westbury and Whorwellsdown Rural District,

for the Year 1925.

Presented to——

The Westbury and Whorwellsdown Rural District Council

——by——

E. T. SHORLAND,

Medical Officer of Health of the Westbury Rural Sanitary Authority.

Westbury Wilts:
A. E. & H. HOLLOWAY, Printers, Stationers &c
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Westbury and Whorwellsdown Rural District Council.

Report

on the Health and Sanitary Condition of the Westbury and Whorwellsdown Rural District :: :: for the Year 1925. :: ::

To the Chairman and Members of the Westbury and Whorwellsdown Rural District Council.

I beg to present my Annual Report for 1925 on the Health and Sanitary Condition of your District.

The Westbury Rural District is a scattered one consisting of the following Parishes:

Dilton Marsh and Chapmanslade,
Heywood and Hawkeridge,
North Bradley,
Southwick,
Road,
Steeple Ashton,
Bratton, Edington and Coulston,
Keevil and Bulkington.

The occupation of the inhabitants is mainly agricultural. A considerable number of Railway employees reside in the Dilton Marsh, Heywood and North Bradley districts, and the Tanyards at Dilton Marsh and the Iron Works at Bratton also afford considerable employment. Gloving is also extensively carried on by residents in your district.

General Statistics.

Area ... 27118 acres.
Population 1921 ... 6570. 1925 (estimated) 6573.
Number of inhabited houses (1921) 1640.
Number of families or separate occupiers (1921) 1700.
Rateable Value ... £53,642.
Assessable Value ... £31,093.
Product of a Penny Rate ... £129 : 11 : 1.
Poor Law Relief ... £411 : 18 : 0.

Extracts from Vital Statistics of the Year.

Births. Legitimate ... Male 47 ... Female 43.
Illegitimate ... „ 4 ... „ 2.
Total 96. ... „ 51 ... „ 45.
Birth Rate 14·6 per 1000.

Deaths. Male 27 ... Female 36 ... Total 63.
Death Rate 9·5 per 1000.
Number of Women dying in,or in consequence of child-birth
(*a*) from Sepsis ... Nil.
(*b*) Other causes ... Nil.

Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age
Legitimate ... Female 3.
Rate ... 31·2 per 1000 Births registered

Deaths from Measles ... Nil.
Whooping Cough ... Nil.
Diarrhœa (under 2 years) ... Nil.

Notifiable Diseases during the Year.

Scarlet Fever 14 .. Sent to Hospital ... 11.
Diphtheria ... 1 ... Sent to Hospital ... 1.
Puerperal Fever 1 ... Sent to Cottage Hospital 1.
Tuberculosis—New Cases.

Age Period.	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.
5—10	...		1.	
10—15	...			2.
15—20	1		1.	
20—25	1	1	1.	
25—35	1	2.		
Total ...	3	3	3	2.

Deaths from Pulmonary Tuberculosis ... Male 1 Female 2.
Non-Pulmonary „ ... Male 1.

Hospitals provided by the Local Authority or by the County Council.

(1). Tuberculosis ... (i) Winsley Sanatorium.
(ii) Harnham, Salisbury, for more advanced cases.
(2). Maternity ... Westbury Workhouse.
(3). Children ... Orthopedic Hospital, Bath.
(4). Fever ... Trowbridge Isolation Hospital.
(5). Smallpox ... Swindon.
(6). *Other* ... Westbury Cottage Hospital,
Trowbridge Cottage Hospital.

Any Institutional provision for Unmarried Mothers, or Homeless Children ... Westbury Workhouse.

Ambulance Facilities—(*a*) For infectious cases, provided by Fever Hospital—Motor Ambulance. (*b*) For non-infectious cases there is a Motor Ambulance stationed at Trowbridge, and can be had by payment according to mileage.

Clinics and Treatment Centres.

Maternity and Child Welfare—Usually carried out by Midwives under jurisdiction of County Authorities.

Day Nurseries . Nil.

School Clinics ... County Health Department.

Tuberculosis Dispensary ... Wednesday Mornings 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Bethesda Road, Trowbridge.

Treatment Centre for Venereal Disease ... Bath United Hospital.

Nursing.

Dilton Marsh ...	Resident Midwife.
Chapmanslade ...	Midwife at Corsley.
Bratton, Edington & Tinhead, Coulston	Midwife resides at Tinhead.
Steeple Ashton, Keevil, West Ashton	Midwife resides at Steeple Ashton.
North Bradley, Southwick, Road & Heywood	Midwife resides at North Bradley.

These nurses are under the jurisdiction of the County Medical Officer, and are provided for partly by subscriptions and fees and partly by grants from the Local and County Authorities.

Water Supply.

The Rural area as a whole is well supplied with water. Details for the supply for each parish are as follows:

Bulkington—Supplied by shallow wells. There has been no shortage.

Bratton—Supply from deep wells drawn chiefly by pumps. There is a private supply for about 20 houses, the water is laid on. Another new supply is being developed by private enterprise to supply houses on the Castle Road.

Dilton Marsh—Public supply from Westbury water. In the majority of cases is laid on to each house. The Joint Water Committee have a scheme in progress to augment the supply.

Chapmanslade—Supply joint with the Warminster Rural Council. Supplied by a ram from Corsley. During the dry spell last summer the supply was insufficient for several weeks especially for the houses situated at the top of the village, and it was found necessary to haul water for domestic use. The chief cause is due to the supply to Hunten Hill Farm, the drinking troughs being supplied direct of the rising main, with the result that the supply to the reservoir was intermittent and at times no water came for six or seven hours. This could be obviated by supplying Hunten Hill Farm and the water troughs from the old Corsley Gravitation Scheme and cutting them off the rising main subject to the consent of the Longleat Estate being obtained.

East Coulston—Supply from wells and from stand pipes, the supply is ample and the quality excellent.

Edington—Supply chiefly from wells and shute springs.

Hinton—Chief supply is a public spring at the bottom of the village. The farms have their own wells, also some of the cottages.

Keevil—The supply for this village is obtained from shallow wells. The quality is fair and there has been no shortage.

Heywood and Hawkeridge—Supply is obtained from Trowbridge Water Co. The main and fittings are now the property of the Rural Council and the water is laid on to each house.

North Bradley and Southwick—Both villages are supplied by the Trowbridge Water Co.

Road (in Wilts)—Supplied by shallow wells. One of the wells supplying six houses was analysed and found impure and cleaned out. On the whole the village is not well supplied.

Steeple Ashton—Public supply owned by the Council, all houses in the village are supplied, the exceptions being the outlying farms. The supply has proved sufficient though the consumption has greatly increased. The water has been laid on to several houses during the past year.

West Ashton—Part of the village is supplied by the Trowbridge Water Co., and the remainder by wells.

Rivers and Streams.

The pollution of the river Biss at the Leigh Leather Works has practically been eliminated.

Drainage and Sewerage.

There is at present no system of sewage disposal in the district. In some parishes the slop water is piped to ditches which are cleaned out by the Council. A large number of houses have cesspools.

Closet accommodation.

The majority of closets are on the pail system and there are only a few of the old privy vaults remaining which are being dealt with. There are a number of water closets which are in the majority of cases drained to cesspools.

The following is a detailed statement of closet accommodation in the district :

Pail Closets	950.
Privies with covered middens ...	300.
Water Closets	128.

Scavenging.

In the parishes of Southwick, Dilton Marsh and North Bradley refuse is collected at intervals as required. At Bratton there are bins provided which are cleared when full. At Steeple Ashton there is a tipping place where the refuse has to be taken by the people themselves,

Sanitary Inspection of Area.

	Inspections made.	Defects noted.	Remedied by informal notice.	Remedied after Statutory notice.	Outstand.
Factories ...	2	Nil.			
Bakehouse ...	8	2	2		
Slaughterhouses	11	1	1		
Cowsheds & Dairies	85	14	12	2	2
Complaints received as to nuisances	10	6	6		
Nuisances noted as result of Inspector's inspection ...	12	12	9	1	2
Houses disinfected	12				
Schools disinfected	1				

Schools.

The present two schools at Bratton are unsatisfactory both as regards the building and the sanitary arrangements and the new Central School it is proposed to erect will be a great improvement. The remainder of the schools in the district are in a good state of repair and sanitary arrangements satisfactory.

Housing.

There is still a shortage of houses in certain parishes in your district. Overcrowding still exists and the number of houses occupied by more than one family has increased. Seven houses under the Housing Act, 1923 have been built by private individuals, and 3 are in the course of erection. I append a general survey of the housing conditions in the various parishes.

Bratton—Cottages on the whole are in a good state of repair. Twelve houses were erected under the 1919 Housing Act, and the Council erected 4 houses in 1910. There are no cottages to let. Two dilapidated cottages which were unfit in the Lower Road have been pulled down and a new house erected, the tenants of the old houses are now living in the Council Houses.

Steeple Ashton—The majority of the houses in the village are the property of the Rood Ashton Estate and are kept in good state of repair. Six houses were erected under the 1919 Scheme.

Keevil—There are no empty cottages, a number of existing houses have been repaired. Four houses have been erected under the 1919 Scheme.

Edington and Tinhead—The cottages at the City are still unsatisfactory though two have been put into fair state of repair. Ten houses were erected under the 1919 Scheme. A further 6 houses are badly needed.

Dilton Marsh and Chapmanslade—There is still a shortage of houses at Dilton Marsh. The existing houses are in a fair state of repair but the majority of the older houses are damp. Eight houses were built under the 1919 Scheme at Dilton Marsh and 8 in 1909. Four at Chapmanslade. Further houses are badly needed.

Southwick—The housing conditions in this village are becoming acute. Nothing has been done to replace houses pulled down by the extension of Messrs. Barnes' Engineering Works. There are 4 houses in a dilapidated condition. At least 20 new houses are needed.

Heywood and Hawkeridge—Four houses were erected under the 1919 Scheme. There are no empty cottages. A further 6 cottages are needed.

North Bradley—Existing houses are generally in good repair. There are no empty Cottages. Subsidy houses erected

Bye-laws—The Building Bye-laws have been revised and brought up to date and made to operate throughout the whole District instead of certain Parishes as before.

Housing Acts, 1909—1925.

Statement of work carried out during the year ending 31st December, 1925, under the above acts, in the Westbury and Whorwellsdown Rural District.

Number of new houses erected during the year.

(*a*) Total (including numbers given separately under (*b*) 6.

(*b*) With State assistance under the Housing Acts:

(*i*) By the Local Authority ... ... Nil.

(*ii*) By other bodies or persons ... ... 5.

1. *Unfit Dwelling Houses.*

Inspection. (1). Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ... ... 115.

(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection) of District) Regulations, 1910, or the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 ... ... 98.

(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ... ... 1.

(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ... ... 48.

2. *Remedy of defects without Service of formal Notices.*

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers ... ... 35.

3. *Action under Statutory Powers*

(*A*) Proceedings under Section 3 of the Housing Act, 1925.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs...	14.
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:	
(*a*) By owners	14.
(*b*) By Local Authority in default of owners	Nil.
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close	Nil.

(*B*) Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	16.
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notice:	
(*a*) By owners	13.
(*b*) By Local Authority in default of owners	Nil.

(*C*) Proceedings under sections 11, 14 and 15 of the Housing Act, 1925.

(1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders	Nil.
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made	Nil.
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit ...	Nil.
(4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ...	Nil.
(5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	Nil.

Milk Supply.

Milk produced in your district is largely exported but during the summer months cheese making is carried on. On the whole there is an improvement in the conditions under which milk is produced, the sheds are kept cleaner, and more attention is being paid to clean milking. There are however a large number of old sheds which are far from being satisfactory. There are 120 cow keepers and 85 inspections were made.

Meat.

Your Inspector attended the course of instruction in Meat Inspection at Bristol, last summer. The majority of meat consumed in this district is brought from Trowbridge and sold in motor vans which are inspected from time to time. The articles of the Public Health (Meat Regulations 1924) as regards food have been distributed to retailers, and shops and vans from which they are sold have been inspected.

Slaughter houses in the district.

	1920.	Jan. 1925.	Dec. 1925.
Registered			
Licensed			
Total ...	4	3	3.

Pigs are practically the only animals slaughtered in the above slaughter houses. There are also a number of pigs slaughtered by cottagers on their own premises during the summer and autumn months. Twenty-five carcases have been inspected and passed as satisfactory.

APPENDIX.

Causes of Death—	*Males.*	*Females.*
All Causes	27 ...	36
Influenza	2	
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System ...	...	3
Other Tuberculous diseases	1	
Cancer	6 ...	5
Diabetes	...	1
Cerebral Hæmorrhage	3 ...	6
Heart Disease ...	5 ...	5
Arteriosclerosis ...	...	1
Bronchitis	...	2
Pneumonia	1	
Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum ...	2	
Nephritis	1 ...	2
Congenital Debility ...		3
Suicide	1	
Other violent deaths ...	...	1
Other Defined Diseases	5 ...	7

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

E. T. SHORLAND.